



Commission on Volunteerism
and Community Service

2014

ANNUAL REPORT



*You are the
Difference*

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Letter from the Chair and the Executive Director



A New Home and a New Mission

2014 was a year of change for us at Serve Illinois. In order to better serve you, we completed a move to our new home at the Illinois Department of Public Health in the Office of Preparedness and Response. In our new home, we will be able to leverage more resources for non-profits, faith-based organizations, and local governments. We will also be able to take a more active role in disaster response.

The latest research on volunteerism, conducted annually by the federal Corporation for National and Community Service, points to great efforts in Illinois. Over 2.57 million volunteered in 2013. The more than 320 million hours devoted to strengthening your communities through volunteerism was valued at \$7.2 BILLION for the year! Whether through formal service programs like AmeriCorps or Senior Corps, or via traditional volunteerism to support faith-based efforts, sports programming, food pantries, or countless other community causes, service equals strength.

We are proud of where we came from, and ever more excited for where we are going. We hope you will join us on this journey in 2015 for the Year of the Volunteer!

Your in Serve,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fredrick D. Nettles'.

Fredrick D. Nettles
Serve Illinois Commission
Chair

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Scott McFarland'.

Scott McFarland
Serve Illinois Commission
Executive Director

Serve Illinois Commission Members

The Commission is appointed by the governor and consists of 25 bipartisan voting members and 15 bipartisan nonvoting members. Commission members are diverse in areas of expertise, race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, and geographic location. At least 25% of the members must be from the City of Chicago and no more than 50% of the commission may be from the same political party. Voting members serve 1 to 3 year terms, and nonvoting members serve at the pleasure of the Governor. Members are:

Frederick D. Nettles, Chair
Don Baden, Vice Chair
Jane Angelis
Kathleen Blair
Julian Brown
Barb Byrne
Merri Dee
James Dixon
Kathy Engelken
Amanda Guinn
John Hosteny
Nancy K. Jameson
Christopher A. Koch
Howard L. Lathan
Beth Ford
Matt McCabe
Adam McGriffin
Jennifer Phillips

Debra Martón
Jenné Myers
Robert "Al" Riddley
Joseph Rives
Giraldo Rosales
Anne Schuman
Cynthia Sims
Stephen Silberman
Barbara Tubekis
Jeff Turnbull
Heather Way
Jennifer Witzel
Chris Errera
Sarah Mackey
Julian Brown
Rob Bonesteel
Nisan Chavkin
Laura Davis

Serve Illinois Commission Staff

Scott McFarland, Executive Director
Sue Zellers, AmeriCorps Program Officer
Karla Kunzeman, Volunteer Programs Manager
Mike Stehlin, Training Officer
Courtney Abbott, Graduate Public Service Intern
Jacob Nudelman, Graduate Public Service Intern





The Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service Act (PA91-798, 20 ILCS 710) enabled the creation of a Commission to promote community service and volunteer participation as a way to foster community and state problem-solving; to encourage and support voluntary citizen involvement in government and private programs throughout Illinois; to establish a long-term, thorough vision and plan of action for national volunteerism and community service efforts in the state; and to serve as the liaison between Illinois and national or state organizations that support its mission.

Mission

The mission of the Serve Illinois Commission is to improve Illinois communities by supporting and enhancing traditional volunteerism and community service and the administration of the AmeriCorps program.

Vision

The Serve Illinois Commission envisions an Illinois where all citizens recognize their ability and responsibility to help strengthen their communities through voluntary service. The Commission strives to create expanded and meaningful volunteerism throughout rural, suburban, and urban Illinois involving people of all backgrounds, cultures, and ages. The Commission envisions volunteers making measurable differences in their communities because they are well trained, supported, and on the cutting edge of problem solving.

Purpose

“The purpose of the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service is to promote and support community service in public and private programs to meet the needs of Illinois citizens; to stimulate new volunteerism and community service initiatives and partnerships; and to serve as a resource and advocate within the Department of Human Services for community service agencies, volunteers, and programs which utilize State and private volunteers.” — 20 ILCS 710, Chapter 1278, paragraphs 3800 to 3806.

Duties

The Commission meets quarterly with the Commission staff to discuss all issues relating to community service in the state. Working in cooperation with State agencies, individuals, local groups, and various other Illinois organizations, the duties of the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service are as follows:

- Prepare a 3-year state service plan in an open, public process, and update it annually
- Fund and administer AmeriCorps*State programs
- Promote National Days of Service (i.e. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, AmeriCorps Week, 9/11 Day of Service)
- Coordinate training, projects, and other activities related to service
- Recognize outstanding community service accomplishments
- Support, expand and improve Illinois community service initiatives
- Prepare financial assistance applications

History

In 1979, the Commission was founded as the Illinois Office of Voluntary Participation. The office switched names and was housed in several different offices before finding its place in the Department of Human Services in 1998. After the implementation of the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service Act in 2000, the commission was aptly named the Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service. The office began using the “Serve Illinois” moniker in 2007. The Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service moved from being housed within the Department of Human Services to its new location in the Illinois Department of Public Health, Office of Preparedness and Response in 2014. This new office is located at 422 S. Fifth Street, Springfield Illinois.

Illinois benefits when citizens, organizations, and businesses work together and strengthen their communities through volunteering and community service.





Overview

Over 2.57 million Illinois citizens are currently volunteering with national and local nonprofits, schools, religious organizations, and other groups in Illinois.

- 3,700 individuals are AmeriCorps members
- 11,000 citizens are Senior Corps members

Facts and Statistics

- In Illinois, 26.7% of citizens volunteer.
- Illinois' "volunteer rate" ranks 26th among states. Although Illinois' volunteer rate generally lags behind most other states in the Midwest, the state exceeds the national average each year.
- This year, the Corporation for National and Community Service gave more than \$37,760,000 to support the national service initiatives in Illinois.
- The top volunteer locations in Illinois are religious organizations (36%) and educational organizations (26.4%).
- In the past year, Illinois citizens volunteered 317.8 million hours; which equals over \$7.2 billion in impact.

Sources: Volunteering in America: <http://www.volunteeringinAmerica.gov/IL>;
Corporation for National and Community Service: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/>



National Service Programs

The Serve Illinois Commission administers AmeriCorps*State programs and partners with other National Service programs that are overseen by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

AmeriCorps

VISTA—Volunteers in Service to America— Members focus on capacity building and seek to end illiteracy, improve health services, increase housing opportunities, or eliminate poverty through their services. Individuals perform little or no direct service.

National Civilian Community Corps— NCCC is a residential service program that deploys teams of members to locations across the nation to instigate service projects with an emphasis on protecting the environment, promoting public safety, and responding to natural disasters.

National Direct Programs—Members perform direct service for organizations that operate in multiple states.

AmeriCorps*State Programs—Members perform direct service for organizations operating only in Illinois.



Senior Corps Programs

RSVP—Retired & Senior Volunteer Program— This program utilizes the talents and time of individuals age 55 and over to serve communities in a variety of capacities.

FGP—Foster Grandparents Program— Participants in this program work directly with low income children.

SCP—Senior Companions Program— Individuals work with other seniors to help them maintain their independence.





AmeriCorps*State

Over 1,200 AmeriCorps*State members perform direct service for communities in Illinois. Through their service, AmeriCorps*State members strengthen communities and build relationships with the organizations and people they serve. Their service includes, but is not limited to, tutoring and mentoring, family literacy, community outreach, restoring parks, recruiting volunteers, safety education, and prenatal care.

AmeriCorps members commit to full or part-time service over a 9-12 month period. During their service, members may receive health coverage, training, and deferment of student loans. About half of all members also receive a modest living allowance. After successful completion of their service term, members receive an education award that can be applied toward existing student loans or used to pay the current cost of attending a higher education program.

Members join together in October of each year for National Service Recognition Day. More information about Recognition Day can be found on page 17.

AmeriCorps*State Grant Funding

AmeriCorps*State grant funding is distributed by the Serve Illinois Commission. These funds are given to local non-profit groups in the form of populated-based formula grants, and the remaining funds are awarded via a competitive grant process overseen by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

In program year 2013-2014, the Serve Illinois Commission awarded nearly \$4.5 million to formula grant programs and \$3.1 million to competitive grant programs. A list of grantees can be viewed on the next page.



Illinois' AmeriCorps Grantees (Headquarters)

Academy for Urban School Leadership (Chicago)
 American Red Cross (Chicago)
 Asian Human Services of Chicago, Inc. (Chicago)
 Children's Home Association of Illinois (Peoria)
 City Year, Inc. (Chicago)
 Greater Chicago Food Depository (Chicago)
 Illinois Bar Foundation (Chicago)
 Illinois Public Health Association (Springfield)
 Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House (East St. Louis)
 Literacy Volunteers of America (Chicago)
 Lutheran Social Services, Prisoner and Family Ministries (Marion)
 Northwestern University Settlement Association (Chicago)
 Public Allies, Inc. (Chicago)
 Rend Lake College (Ina)
 Sauk Valley Community College (Dixon)
 Schuler Family Foundation (Lake Forest)
 Southwestern Illinois College (Belleville)
 Springfield Urban League (Springfield)
 Teach for America (Chicago)
 University of Illinois (Chicago)
 Up2Us Sports (Chicago)
 Western Illinois University (Macomb)
 West Suburban PADS (Oak Park)
 Youth Organization Umbrella, Inc. (Evanston)
 YMCA of Rock River Valley (Rockford)



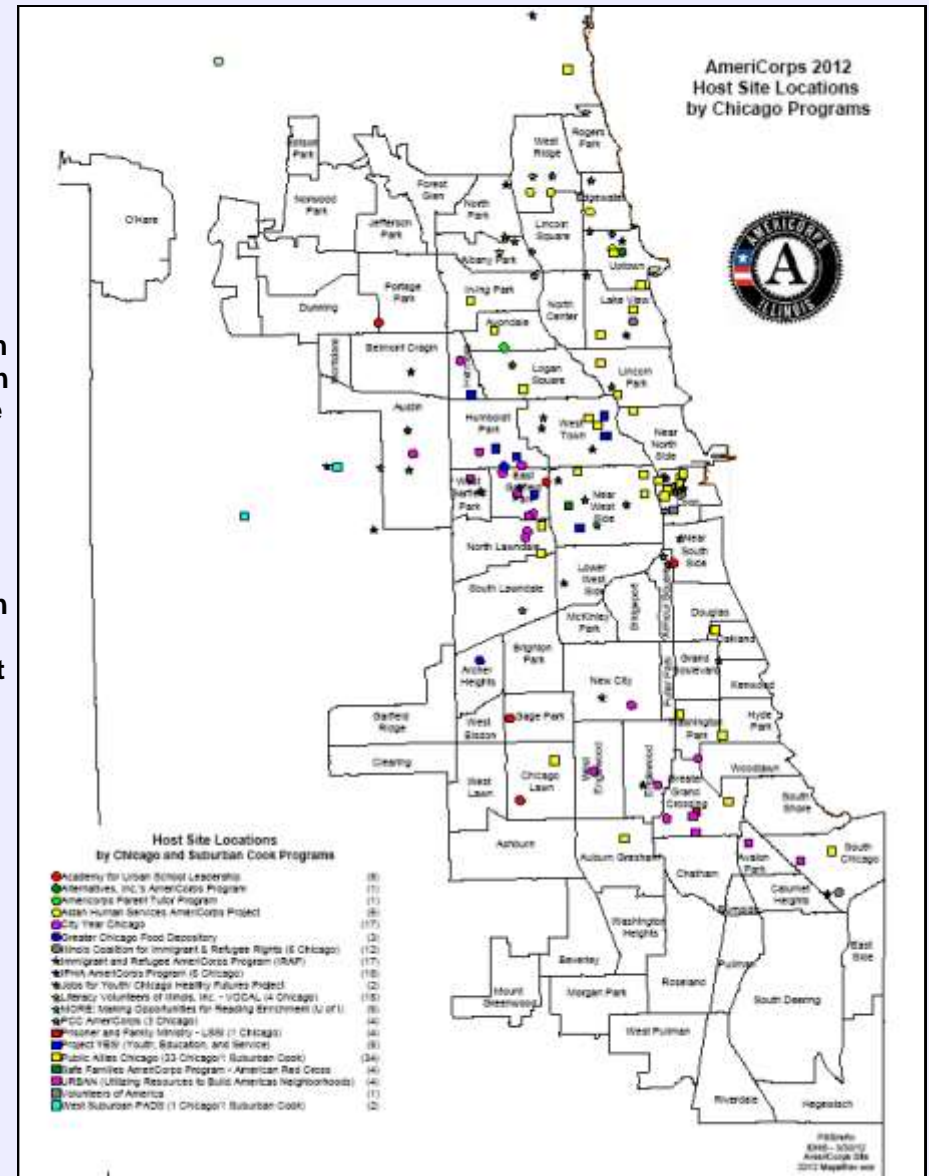
Volunteering in Illinois



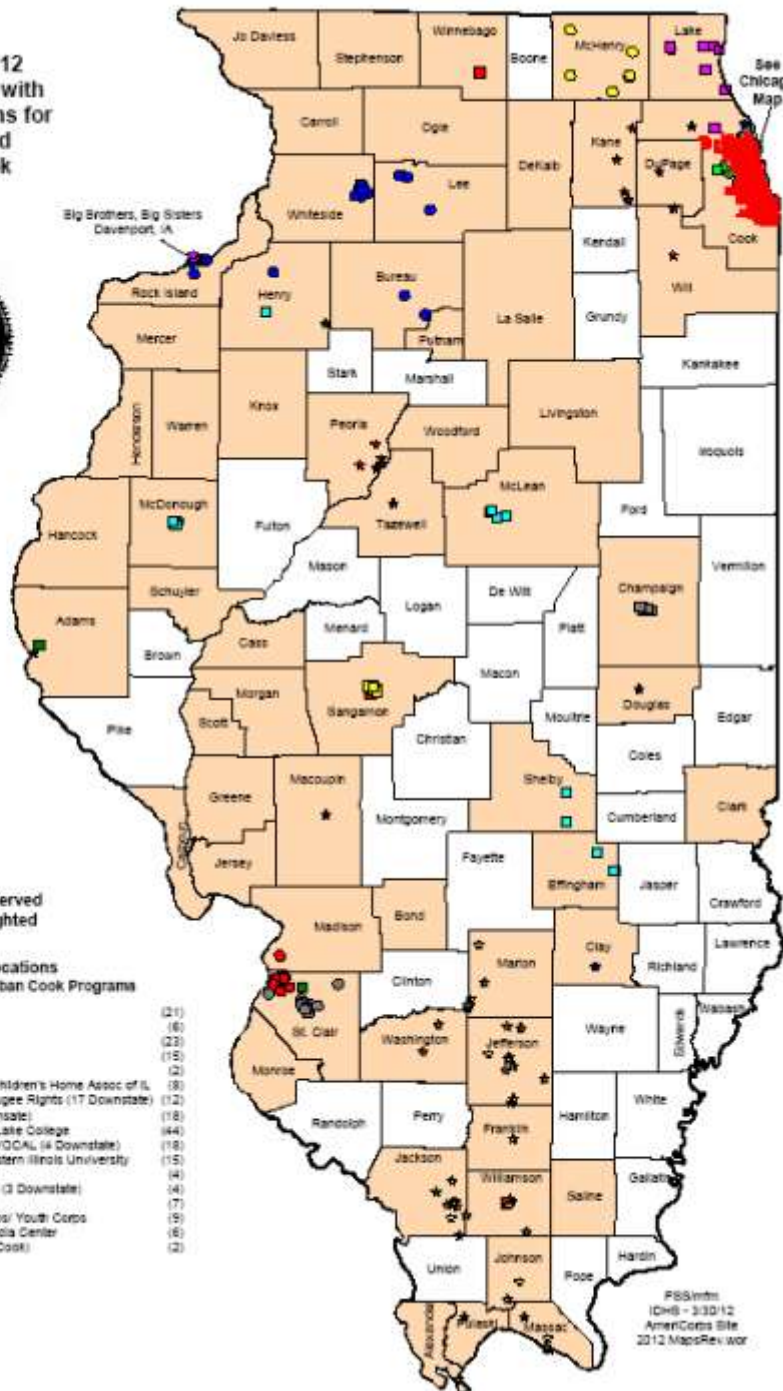


Map of AmeriCorps*State Programs

Each program determines where its Members can best carry out their service to their target communities. Some programs operate at a single site or in a single city or county. Other programs operate with several partner sites in multiple counties. The maps on the following page show host sites for all AmeriCorps*State programs. Cook county sites have been broken out for easier viewing. Counties that receive support from AmeriCorps*State Members are colored in beige. Host sites and their number of locations are listed in the keys on each map.



AmeriCorps 2012 Counties Served with Host Site Locations for Downstate and Suburban Cook Programs



Volunteering in Illinois



Volunteer Management Network

The Illinois Volunteer Management Network (VMN) seeks to cultivate an extensive resource network of voluntary agencies and associations, small and large, across Illinois. The purpose of the network is to help address the primary concerns of these agencies' hardworking volunteer managers and administrators, including recruitment and retention of volunteers, local organizational capacity-building efforts, and ongoing training and professional development opportunities for volunteer managers.

The state of Illinois is divided into four networks: Central, Northeast, Northwest, and Southern. Each region holds an annual conference that includes sessions and workshops targeted toward individuals who currently work with or are interested in working with volunteers.

2014 Conferences:



Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference
June 12, 2014- Springfield, IL
140 Participants



Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration
August 7, 2014 - Chicago, IL
200 Participants



Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference
September 25, 2014 - Belleville, IL
140 Participants



Northwestern Illinois Volunteerism Conference
October 10, 2014 - Moline, IL
70 Participants



Cities of Service

Founded in New York City on September 10, 2009 by 17 mayors from across the nation, Cities of Service aims to create a vibrant network of municipal governments effectively leveraging citizen service as a reliable, viable tool to achieve measurable impact on pressing local challenges. The coalition builds on the work of former New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, who created the nation's first high-impact service plan in April 2009 and appointed the nation's first municipal Chief Service Officer. By accelerating the service movement at the most local level—connecting local needs to the supply of willing volunteers in innovative and impactful new ways—Cities of Service aspires to create a new chapter in America's longstanding history of service while making local government more effective.

Today, the Cities of Service coalition includes over 150 mayors, representing over 50 million Americans. Like the founding mayors, each coalition member has made a commitment to work with other mayors around the country and advance service strategies in their own city by crafting a high-impact service plan.

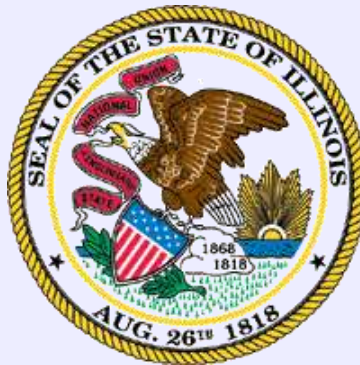


To become a City of Service, a Declaration of Service that highlights a commitment to community service and intention to create a service plan for the city must be signed by the mayor. There are no costs or requirements attached to becoming a City of Service, and once registered, a city will be eligible for a portion of a multi-million dollar grant pool each year. In 2013, Illinois' own Campton Hills received a \$25,000 Impact Volunteering Fund grant to train and engage volunteers in emergency preparedness.

Illinois continues to be a leader in the effort to make volunteerism a grass roots movement with more than 40 mayors pledging their efforts to community based volunteerism. Those cities include: Ashmore, Aurora, Belleville, Belvidere, Chatham, Chicago, Columbia, Campton Hills, East Moline, East St. Louis, Elgin, Evanston, Forest Park, Franklin Park, Glendale Heights, Hazel Crest, Hanover Park, Hoffman Estates, Island Lake, Joliet, Kewanee, Libertyville, Markham, Midlothian, Moline, Montgomery, Mt. Vernon, North Chicago, O'Fallon, Olympia Fields, Palatine, Park Ridge, Peoria, Richton Park, Robbins, Rock Island, Rushville, Salem, Sauk Village, Silvis, Streamwood, University Park, and Waterloo.

If you would like more information on Cities of Service, please visit www.citiesofservice.org. To register as a City of Service, please contact info@CitiesOfService.org





The proper recognition of volunteers is an important component in any volunteer program, large or small. With ongoing issues relating to volunteer retention nationwide and in all types of organizations, the Serve Illinois Commission encourages some form of appropriate volunteer recognition. Although recognition is given on a national level and through private/service organizations, the Commission recognizes volunteers in the following ways:

The Governor's Volunteer Service Awards

2013 marked the fourth year of the Governor's Volunteer Service Awards in Illinois. These awards recognize individual volunteers through a statewide award program to highlight the importance of volunteerism and community service in the State of Illinois.

Awards are presented annually in April at the Executive Mansion in Springfield. Each year, Commissioners read the nominations and jointly decide on a winner in each award category. Awards are presented to one Youth (18 and under), one Adult (19-54 years old), one Retiree/Senior (55+ years old) and one AmeriCorps, Senior Corps member in each of the Commission's five service regions across the state (Northeast, Northwest, East Central, West Central and Southern Illinois). 2013 was the first year a non-profit organization in each region was recognized for their volunteer work in addition to the other five categories. Nominees for each award category serve in one of the following focus areas: Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Conservation, Disaster Preparedness/Response, Health, and Veterans Affairs.

In 2013, the Commission received a record high 185 nominations from across the state. To see a list and short biography of current and past recipients of the Governor's Volunteer Service Award, visit the Serve.Illinois.gov website.

Volunteer Recognition Certificates

These certificates, printed in full color on ivory parchment paper, are provided free of charge to volunteer programs in Illinois. Each certificate includes a name blank to be completed by the program, and the signatures of the Governor of Illinois, the Illinois Department of Human Services Secretary, and the Chair of the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service. The certificates are available year-round by contacting the Commission and are a great way to recognize volunteers for their service. Over 1,800 certificates were distributed to volunteers in 2013.

National Service Recognition Day

The 2014 Illinois National Service Recognition Day was held on September 12, 2014 at the Prairie Capital Convention Center and the State Capitol in Springfield. Nearly 1,000 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members from across the state took part in the event, which recognized programs and energized members for the upcoming service year.

The celebration began with a livestream of remarks from President Barack Obama about the importance of National Service. Recorded remarks from Former Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush along with Former First Lady, Laura Bush were also shown. After lunch at the Prairie Capital Convention Center, Former President Abraham Lincoln (Fritz Klein, Lincoln impersonator) made an appearance to the delight of the AmeriCorps members. Three large service projects were also a part of the “Opening Day” of service: a Central Illinois Community Blood Center blood drive was on hand for donations, a food drive benefitting the Central Illinois Food Bank collected non-perishable food items, and the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central Illinois hosted a pop tab collection to benefit the local Ronald McDonald House.

After lunch Scott McFarland, Brandon Bodor and Liz Foster recognized each program and their accomplishments. After this, members then began their march from the Prairie Capital Convention Center to the State Capitol Complex. The march was led by Abraham Lincoln. Many programs marched with banners displaying their program name; other members carried small American flags. On the steps of the Capitol, at the base of the Abraham Lincoln statue, members reaffirmed their Oath of Service to America with Brandon Bodor and Abraham Lincoln leading AmeriCorps members in the oath, proclaiming their commitment to a year of service to Illinois. The Serve Illinois Commission hopes members left the event with a renewed commitment to service and a feeling of excitement for their upcoming year of service.





To best prepare volunteer managers and Commissioners for the challenges they may face in the realm of volunteerism, the Serve Illinois Commission hosts multiple training sessions each year.

Program Director Training

Each year, Serve Illinois staff hosts mandatory training sessions for new and tenured AmeriCorps*State program directors. In 2014, the training occurred in August in Springfield. Through the training, program directors discussed challenges they have encountered within their organization and proposed solutions. They also shared ideas for strengthening performance measures, data collection systems, and data analysis. Attendees learned about fiscal and grants management, how to manage members, the basics of National Service, and received Commission updates.

Commissioner Retreat

Serve Illinois Commissioners meet four times a year. This year, in October, Commissioners met at Starved Rock State Park in Oglesby, Illinois. While there, Commissioners not only participated in leadership and team building exercises but also discussed ways in which Serve Illinois can reach broader and more diverse populations. They also discussed Serve Illinois' commitment to disaster response with Jon Monken, Director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency.

Cross Streams Training

Serve Illinois offers and sponsors program development and training sessions for AmeriCorps*State programs and other National Service programs such as Senior Corps and Learn and Serve. Each year in October, Serve Illinois invites National Service programs to meet in Springfield for National Service Recognition Day (see page 17 for more information.) Additionally, Serve Illinois sponsors four regional Volunteerism Conferences (Central Illinois Volunteerism Conference (CIVC), Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration (ICOVA), Northwestern Illinois Volunteerism Conference (NWIVC), and Southern Illinois Volunteerism Conference (SIVC).) These conferences are open to any volunteer managers, volunteers, National Service Members, and the general public. Each conference offers a wide array of information dealing with all facets of service.

Serve.Illinois.gov and other Web Presence

Serve.Illinois.gov is used by community-based organizations and individuals seeking to connect volunteer needs with volunteer resources. Organizations can post opportunities, and prospective volunteers can search for opportunities by zip code, county, state or category of service. There are currently more than 2,500 volunteer opportunities listed. Thousands of individuals have utilized Volunteer Match on the website to search for volunteer opportunities. These opportunities cover a broad range of interest bases including; environmental rehabilitation, animal care and children services.

Serve Illinois achieved gains in social media platform engagement in 2014. Followers on Twitter rose from 520 on January 1st, 2014 to 750 on the last day of the year. Similarly, Serve Illinois Commission's Facebook page experienced growth in 'likes,' increasing from 220 likes to 450. We plan to boost our social media engagement significantly to reach more potential volunteers in 2015.

Illinois State Service Plan

The 2013-2016 State Service Plan was developed through an open and public process in which all Illinoisans were encouraged to contribute feedback. The Serve Illinois Commission hosted a series of listening sessions in the fall of 2012 in the four regions of the state and invited all citizens to make public comment. Those who could not attend in person were invited to make public comment via a survey on Serve.Illinois.gov.

The following five strategic goals represent guiding objectives for the Commission in 2013-16:

- The Commission will strengthen existing partnerships, while seeking valuable new ones, in order to close gaps of volunteerism across all communities.
- The Commission will engage in active outreach to gather input, build awareness, and carry out initiatives to elevate volunteerism in Illinois.
- The Commission will embrace diversity and inclusion, encouraging individuals of all abilities to join the volunteer sector.
- The Commission will explore and implement effective volunteer management systems to enhance community resilience
- The Commission will focus on its own sustainability, and on maximizing the value it adds to partners and sub-grantees.

To view the complete Illinois State Service Plan, visit the Serve Illinois Commission website and click on "Rules and Planning" beneath the "About Us" tab.





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